The Congregationalist

OUR HOST CHURCH

ANNUAL MEETING · OCTOBER 21-23

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

September 1958

The Savoy Declaration of 1658

Henry David Gray, Ph.D., Hartford, Connecticut

On June 15, 1658 Henry Scobell, England's Clerk of the Council of State under Oliver Cromwell, wrote to the ministers of London as follows:—

> "Sir, the meeting of elders of the congregationall churches in and about London, is appointed at Mr. Griffith's on Monday next, at two of the clocke in the afternoone, where you are desired to be present. I am sir, yours to love and serve you in the Lord."

The meeting was held. By its instruction The Reverend George Griffith (minister at the Charter House in London) sent letters "in the name . . . of the congregationall elders in and about London" calling together pastors and delegates of the Congregational Churches in England.

On September 29, 1658 about 120 representatives met in London at the Chapel of The Old Savoy Palace. Many were laymen, but there were present ministers of great learning and high competency like John Owen, Dean of Christ Church in Oxford, and Vice-Chancellor of the University from 1652 to 1658, Thomas Goodwin, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Philip Nye, a Lecturer at Westminster Abbey.

The meeting opened with a day of fasting and prayer during which the Assembly sought the guidance of God as to "what to pitch upon," as reported by Neal. There ensued days of discussion marked by brilliant speaking, in which there was, as described by a member (Reverend James Forbes), "a most sweet harmony of both hearts and judgments."

On the succeeding days of the Council a Committee of six which included Owen, Goodwin, and Nye reported each morning to the whole Assembly. Discussion followed, but so great was the general accord that much time was given each day for devotional exercises. And when the entire report was complete it received unanimous approval, on October 12, 1658, to the surprise and gratification of the entire Assembly.

Two Great Statements

The English *Savoy Declaration* of 1658 stands with the New England *Cambridge Platform* of 1648 as one of the two great seventeenth century statements of the Congregational way which were prepared by consultation among representatives of the Churches, and issued as the findings of a called Assembly.

Theologically, Savoy and Cambridge, for the most part, followed the *Westminster Confession,* in the preparation of which some of the Savoy divines had shared.

The thirty terse sections on church-order are the original and important contributions of the *Savoy Declaration.* Here, in brief, compact, clear form are presented the fundamental principles of Congregationalism, viz., the sole headship of Christ, the gathering of a Church by covenant of believers, the complete autonomy of the local Church, including its right to choose its leaders and ordain its Pastors, the necessity of a call to confer ministerial standing, the consent of the members as essential to all admissions and censures, communion of Churches as a spiritual fellowship to increase peace, love and mutual edification, and Councils of Churches to give advice but without "Church Power" or "any Jurisdiction over the Churches themselves."

To make the strict limitations of a Council even more explicit, the *Declaration* added "Besides these occasional Synods or Councels, there are not instituted by Christ any stated Synods in a fixed Combination of Churches, or their Officers in lesser or greater Assemblies; nor are there any Synods appointed by Christ in a way of Subordination to one another."

To emphasize the religious and theological bases of the Congregational Way the Savoy divines wrote "These particular Churches thus appointed by the Authority of Christ, and intrusted with power from him . . . are each of them . . . the seat of that Power which he is pleased to communicate to his Saints or Subjects in this world, so that as such they receive it immediately from himself. Besides these particular Churches, there is not instituted by Christ any Church more extensive or Catholique intrusted with power for the administration of his Ordinances, or the execution of any authority in his name."

A Dividing Line

It is worthy of note that Goodwin, Owen and Nye, who helped to frame the *Savoy Declaration,* were Barrowist rather than Brownist in their sympathies; they were not, strictly speaking, complete Independents. Hence, the *Declaration* represents those points at which they felt it necessary to draw a dividing line, on theological grounds, between the Presbyterian and Congregational polities.

The influence of the *Savoy Declaration* in England was blunted by the political events subsequent to the death of Oliver Cromwell, September 3, 1658. But its *Confession* was adopted widely in New England (Massachusetts, 1680, Connecticut, 1708) and in 1865 it was declared by a National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States to embody substantially the faith of those Churches. The Savoy polity section was so similar to the *Cambridge Platform* of 1648 that the American Churches continued to use the earlier and ampler statement of church order. Savoy and Cambridge are twin trumpets of Congregational Church order.

The Savoy Tercentenary on October 12, 1958 is worthy of wide recognition. Savoy sets forth the fundamental principles which characterize Congregational Churches. The Declaration proclaims the centrality of Christian religious experience, the scriptural basis of Church freedom and authority, the responsibilty of sisterly concern for other Churches, the virtue of tolerance, and the validity of the covenant relation of members within the Church. These are characteristics of a Church of Christ, without which it cannot properly be called "Congregational."

News Notes

Pastoral Change

The South Congregational Church, Amherst, Ohio, has called to its pastorate Mr. Donald Nichols, a licentiate formerly at Vermontville, Michigan.

The First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa announces that Rev. Norman Ream, now serving the Methodist church of Neenah, Wisconsin, has been called to succeed Mr. Swanson.

Who says of him: "He is a person about my age, who shares our basic point of view with regard to the drive toward an organically united church. He will add considerable strength to our cause."

SAVOY TERCENTENARY AWARD

THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAVOY DECLARATION, OCTOBER 12, 1658

WRITERS ARE INVITED

to submit manuscripts for a layman's study book outlining our Christian faith as set forth in the New Testament and presenting the nature of the Church and the duties of Church members as set forth in The Savoy Declaration.

1. Manuscripts must be typewritten, approximately 200 pages in length.
2. Manuscripts must be submitted not later than March 1, 1959.
3. The judges' decision will be made public on May 15, 1959.
4. The writer of the first prize manuscript will receive $100 in cash, with publication of the book guaranteed.
5. The writer of the second prize manuscript will receive $50 in cash.
6. Contest judges, whose decision is final, are Professor Matthew Spinka, Ph.D., Hartford Theological Seminary; Rev. Wendell L. Fifield, D.D., First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, Calif.; The Reverend Henry David Gray, Ph.D., South Congregational Church, Hartford, Conn.

Further information and entry forms may be obtained by writing to Professor Matthew Spinka, 221 Girard Avenue, Hartford 5, Conn.

A Mayflower Space-Ship

Rev. Ward K. Klopp, Merrill, Michigan

As a subscriber to the magazine "Christendom" when it was first published, the writer was deeply impressed by an article by Dr. George M. Gibson in one of the first issues to the effect that basically the theology of Protestantism and Catholicism was the same. From this the writer gained the impression that the ecumenical movement of which "Christendom" was the organ had as its ultimate goal union with the Catholic Church; one vast, universal ecclesiastical organization.

This impression was by no means lessened when Dr. Nels Ferre in his lecture at the General Council on "The Lordship of Christ in His Church" made the claim that the Church and the Kingdom of God are co-terminous; and that there can be no salvation save through the Church. As I listened to the lecture it seemed to me that I could visualize the Pope standing with outstretched arms welcoming our Congregational Fellowship to his bosom.

This impression was again sustained when Dr. Douglas Horton, in his Report on the World Council of Churches, and speaking of the theology of the Faith and Order movement in the World Council, made the statement that the highest commendation on the theology of the Faith and Order movement came from Catholic scholars and clergy.

A Divine Purpose

As Christians we believe that there is a Divine purpose in all the epochal events of history. Today we have scientists and militarists seriously considering the problem of outer space control. There are those who say that control of the moon is a vital military necessity. All this while ecclesiastics are dreaming of an ultimate universal ecclesiastical organization.

In the light of all this it is not at all difficult to visualize the day when there will be the need of a place of refuge for men and women of liberal, independent views as was the case with the Pilgrims, and has been the case all through history. Perhaps the Almighty, in His infinite foreknowledge and wisdom, is already preparing such a place on some planet. And when His time comes a Mayflower space ship will be ready and prepared for those valiant Pilgrim souls to venture forth to that new planet where, like the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock, they can worship God according to the dictates of their consciences.

Congregational Bookshelf

Rev. Royal G. Davis, Los Angeles, California

Geoffrey Nuttall of New College, London, has written a learned study of those golden years for British Congregationalism (1640-1660) beginning with the petition of 15,000 Englishmen to abolish episcopacy and ending with the fall of Cromwell's noble Protectorate. During those years Congregationalism came to full flower, supported by a large portion of the educated and favored by Parliament's freedom fighters. (*Visible Saints*: *The Congregational Way,* by Geoffrey Nuttall, Blackwell's, Oxford, 25s.)

By a careful examination of those years the church historian is able to define the true nature of the Congregational Way. Four basic principles emerge from the study: separatism, fellowship, freedom and personal fitness.

Our churches grew out of the Separatist tradition. Congregationalism means the separateness of each local church free to govern its own life in its own way. We put the local church first and that makes us Congregationalists. There is no Catholic Church over the individual congregations. We forever separate ourselves from the unwarranted supervision of synod, bishop, presbyter or pope.

The church covenant is equally important. Christian fellowship results from "a free society or communion of visible saints embodied and knit together in one by voluntary consent" (1647). A church is born out of a covenant of believers one with another and all with God.

The separateness and internal fellowship of Congregationalism fosters Christian liberty. As the Savoy Platform declares, "The Spirit of Christ is in himself too free, great and generous a spirit, to suffer himself to be used by any human arm, to whip men into belief; He drives not but gently leads into all truth."

Congregationalism stresses personal responsibility. Laymen are candles of the Lord whose light should demonstrate the goodness of God in the land of the living. What one is should reflect what he believes.

"Congregationalists have found the model for their polity or organization independent without, congregational within, and for no other, in the New Testament." Dr. Nuttall gives the historical background for those treasured words: Protestant, Non-conformist, Separatist, Dissenter and Independent.

UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

Rev. Harry W. Johnson, Boise, Idaho

There are more denominations today than there were fifty years ago. And in another fifty years there will be even more. It is true also, that during the last half century, most of the church members in the major Protestant bodies in America have come to regard as fellow-Christians all sincere followers of their common Lord. Our lay people have already entered the new day of ecumenical Christianity. To them Christian unity is a thing of the spirit. And it is here and now.

Organizational diversity among American denominations is not the sin and shame of Protestantism. Rather it is a testimony to the infinite variety of ways by which God can reach his children with the message of the Gospel. When people are born and grow to maturity in a climate of religious liberty such as is to be found in these United States, then God's loving spirit more easily finds its way into their hearts, unimpeded by man-made barriers of formal creed or ecclesiastical domination.

Our God, Creator of all flowers of the open field in their myriad varieties, a God so resourceful that every snowflake can have a pattern all its own, Father of the whole human family with no two of us alike — surely such a Heavenly Father is not offended nor disturbed at the evidence of variety which he finds among His worshipping children.

Unity is Spiritual

How meaningless to such a God must be the hapless efforts of those who urge upon all of His children conformity to a common pattern of church life and organization. The idea of organic union of the churches, thus viewed, loses its right to claim to be "the will of God." Christian unity is a spiritual experience among people. It is real, or it is less than real, according to what is in the heart and mind of fellow worshippers. Externalities of organization, or variation in denominational labels and loyalties, are not the heart of the matter. A vital unity of the spirit can and does reach easily across such lines of demarcation.

And this, too, has been amply demonstrated in the last fifty years. The many Christian interests which were too wide to be confined to denominational patterns have, during this half century, brought into being more interdenominational organizations, church councils, local, state, national and world-wide, than had been created in all the previous centuries of Protestant history.

Congregationalists should take note that one principle has run consistently through all of the processes by which the denominations have been learning to work together. It is the principle that all relationships between churches and denominations are always completely voluntary relationships.

Faith in such a principle had to be learned as something new by those denominations, which within their own household of faith had always relied to some degree upon a measure of centralized authority.

Our own history as Congregationalists had prepared our people for the role of teachers and leaders in just such a situation. They were skilled in the practice of building, strongly and well, upon a structure whose foundation was faith in loyalty freely given to a common cause. We had lived by faith in the cohesive power of such loyalty since the day of our beginnings as a fellowship of free churches.

Congregational leaders, above all others, could be expected to be prepared for roles of significant leadership in this new field. To lead only by persuasion, to cooperate generously without ever being under compulsion, to respect always the right of others to make their own decisions — these things were part of the very fabric of our Congregational heritage. For us, this was the most truly Christian way, as well as the way which had characterized Congregationalism.

When the need, in America and in the whole world, was for that kind of leadership for all ecumenical activities, destiny was looking our way. Protestantism was ready to build boldly upon the principles it had learned from its own free churches. Christian unity would soon be served by all of the major groups of Protestantism once having learned the effectiveness of free and voluntary relationships in joint endeavor. This was, indeed, unity of the spirit, on the threshold of a new day.

Lost Faith In Freedom

Then, just at dawn of this new day, our denominational leaders lost their faith in Congregational principles. The Congregational way was too slow, too unwieldly for "this atomic age." Faced by rapid changes in our secular world, sharing a sense of fear which had never before touched the American spirit, impressed by the examples of big business and big international power-blocs, our Congregational leaders embraced the creed of the world, that salvation is by might. Only the strong will survive, in this kind of a world, so the World would not listen to the Christian gospel unless that gospel had behind its witness the authoritative backing of one Great Church. The whole fear-ridden world was resorting to a centralization of authority, and our Congregational Christian churches were urged to follow this worldly pattern.

But faith in the cohesive power of loyalty freely given to a sacred cause is deeply rooted in our churches and in the lives of Congregational Christian people. Faith in the gospel of freedom in Christ is for many the heart of the Good News to which we are to give witness in an unbelieving world.

Congregationalists with the courage of their convictions will not be conformed to this World. They will continue, in humility, to seek for themselves and for their fellows, that they be transformed by the renewing of their minds that they "may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

"So we, being many, *are* one body in Christ and every one members one of another."

EXECUTIVE OFFICE RELOCATES

The central office of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, which has been at 1301 North 15th Street, Boise, Idaho, since its establishment, was moved on September 1 to 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin. As announced in the May CONGREGATIONALIST, Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr. of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, has been chosen as Executive Secretary, to succeed Dr. Harry W. Johnson. A tribute to Dr. Johnson's work on behalf of our Congregational cause will appear in the October issue of this paper.

WOMEN'S WORK

By You and For You

By the time this issue of the CONGREGATIONALIST reaches you the first program publication by and for Congregational Christian Churchwomen should be in the hands of the president of your Congregational women's organization. Additional copies of this program handbook may be secured from the office of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches at 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

The Commission on Women's Work of the National Association presents this first publication as a guide, as a challenge, and as an inspiration that we may better serve Christ in a Congregational fellowship of Christian churchwomen. With ears open to constructive criticism of former program materials and eyes open to future program needs we of the Women's Commission with a spirit of Congregationalism in our hearts have assembled your ideas and materials. We have condensed and formulated a workable and correlated program aid plan or form for use either in part or as a whole for the coming year.

Two Specific Needs

It became apparent to the Commission, as we discussed plans for our program brochure, that at present two specific needs, which are inherently ours as Congregational women, should be stressed in order to strengthen our women's organizations and further justify their existence.

These needs, uppermost in our minds as the Program Handbook evolved, were (1) the need to heed and herald our Congregational heritage and (2) the need to use individual ingenuity and adaptability concerning programs for specific occasions, or purposes.

It is the hope and prayer of the members of the Commission that the Program Handbook will assist and be the link to join our spirits in the desire to serve and preserve the principles of Congregationalism which were and will remain one of the foundation stones of freedom.

We take this opportunity to acknowledge with grateful thanks the assistance in assembling material given by many of the women of the First Congregational Church of Marshalltown, Iowa. We further acknowledge and thank the interested and sympathetic women, from far and near, in these United States, who furnished skits, program plans, source materials and inspiration for the program handbook.

We urge that every member church or sympathetic church, send a woman delegate, as an official delegate or as an official or interested observer, to the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, to be held in Detroit, Michigan, October 21, 22 and 23 of this year. Here, your individual church voice will be heard in the true Congregational way to help formulate plans and future program publications for Congregational Christian Women's Organizations.

What Is A Good Women's Organization?

Vacations are over, schools have started, and most women's organizations are ready to begin a new year of activity in helping to build a better church, a better Congregational church, a better community through that Congregational church. A good women's organization doesn't "just happen." Its effectiveness is the result of good conscientious planning, followed by constant testing of those plans even before they are put into operation. The following questions suggest ways to test your plans and programs.

1. Is the main focus of your planning really different from that of a secular organization? Does it help members to recognize the highest values in life and motivate them to strive to lead better lives? Is the dominant note Christian?
2. Is there a plan for self-improvement (Bible study, prayer, recommended reading) as well as a plan for self-expression through service to others, witnessing and testimony?
3. Is the spiritual growth of members given the major consideration? Do members have an opportunity to experience and share in prayer and worship? Is there a growing prayer fellowship?
4. Is there a growing membership? Is there a definite plan for membership increase? Is attendance growing? Do members have an opportunity to suggest new methods, or propose new ideas?
5. Is there a definite purpose to your organization? Does the program contribute to the fulfillment of that purpose? Is entertainment, education, worship or motivation the real reason for choosing this particular program?
6. What ought a leader in a Congregational church know about her church? Make a list and invite the committee chairmen to make a list also. Invite your minister to discuss these questions at a meeting with your chairmen.
7. Does your organization follow time-honored Congregational methods of procedure? Do members feel free to participate? Is the list of participating members increasing? Do the programs REALLY matter in terms of every-day living? Do they provide food for thought after the program is over? Is anything ever done to solve the problem after it is presented?
8. Study the outline of your programs for the year ahead. Adjust them to your purpose as an organization. Adapt them to the needs of your own group. Substitute when you cannot adopt. Be selective. Have more than one possibility from which to choose that which best suits your purpose.

New Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship of the Central Association of Congregational Christian Churches was organized on April 23 at the Rosemoor Community Church of Chicago. A full program of missions, summer camp and women's work has been planned.

IS YOUR CHURCH HELPING?

The work of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches is supported by the voluntary gifts of its member churches, and by gifts from other interested churches and individuals. The National Association has operated within its income, but it has not had funds adequate to develop fully the program as authorized by votes of the delegates at Hartford. Some immediate expansion of activities is imperative, and commitments have been made to meet these necessary additional expenses.

The financial support of every member church is needed to meet the costs of such a program. Such help from every church spells the difference between a budget authorized and a full program in action. If your church has not as yet contributed to the National Association, please suggest such action to those in your church who are in positions of responsibility for these matters.

Check should be sent to Paul R. Biggs, Treasurer, Barclay Building, Oregon City, Oregon.

— GEORGE V. BOHMAN, Moderator

Is This The Charter?

A. M. Bjornstad, Spencer, Iowa

In an address entitled "Rediscovering the Charter," Dr. Victor Obenhaus of the Chicago Theological Seminary stressed the great need for union to the Laymen of the Iowa Conference during the Annual Meeting at Osage. Stressing the need for bigness and control from above, Dr. Obenhaus declared that these factors were essential to meet the challenge of urban living in this age.

The address by Dr. Obenhaus was one of the most coherent discourses favoring union that this writer has heard. It revealed some of the sincere thinking on the subject that surely others must have thought and heard. And when men of thoughtful intelligence are able to explain so clearly their sincere conviction, the movement toward union is speeded.

But however sincere and logical a man may appear, the creeping paralysis of spiritual suicide was apparent in this address. The conclusion that size and control are essential to success is the indicator. It is obvious that the pendulum of human liberties, always in motion, is swinging far to the left again. With so much of the world engulfed in tyranny, totalitarianism, and fear, it is natural to expect that even a free denomination of churches will be confronted (and sabotaged) with the bitter giveaway of its cherished liberties.

No Lasting Freedom

No matter how sincere the reassurances of some Congregational leaders, guarantees of continuing religious freedoms and "business as usual" cannot have any permanent or lasting foundation. The road of bigness and control advocated by Dr. Obenhaus, on the contrary, cannot but lead directly to a loss of local freedom and to an unknown but severe theology. Such is the history of growth based on size and control. A religious philosophy based on a love (or fear) of the organization negates the real need for spiritual growth.

Would it be logical to conclude that Dr. Obenhaus would advocate further union among Protestant Churches in the years ahead? We must assume that if he favors the union of two unlike denominations, he surely would not speak against additional merger in the future of denominations of a more similar nature. In theory this would eventually result in one Protestant Church, united with one doctrine, one belief and one hierachy.

What other conclusions can we draw as to the eventuality of this if we attempt to project our thinking a few years hence? And what would be the likely result of this discarding of the traditional American love for varied and free approach to the Kingdom of God?

Our Devotional Column

Strengthening Hands

Rev. James W. Conlin, Brazil, Indiana

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." — *Isaiah 35:3.*

To the Pharisees Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." — *Luke 11:23.*

God not only expects us not to hinder; He expects us to help. Those of us who are not helpers are usually hinderers. If you tried yesterday not to hinder, why not complete the job today by being a helper?

We are surrounded on every side by weak hands. All of us who profess to be followers of the Christ sense our own weakness. We feel our own need of assistance, of strength, just as Moses had need for Aaron and Hur to uphold his hands during the battle with the forces of Amalek in Rephidim.

There are times when people show themselves to be so weak that we wonder as to whether it is worthwhile to attempt to impart strength to them. But what would have happened to you and me had Jesus of Nazareth taken this attitude?

Perhaps we are responsible for the continuance of the weakness about us. Perhaps we have done little or nothing to strengthen the needy. Maybe we have talked about it instead of praying about it. No doubt you can think of several just at this time who need the strength that it is within your power to impart. If so, take those at once to God, and ask Him to strengthen the weak hands and confirm those feeble knees. The New Testament admonishes us to pray for one another for "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." — *James 5:16.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson tells us that we are a part of all we have met. Therefore we never come in contact with one who is spiritually strong without being strengthened. At such time as Saul was seeking to take the life of David, "Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God." Arising always indicates that effort is being expended. God has given us our orders. He said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people."

God says, "Speak to the heart of my people." Our God wants us to be diligent, attentive to His cause. He doesn't want us to hint, to beat about the bush. Filled with wisdom, prompted by love we are to "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not."

Before we can strengthen others, before we can really lift up other hands, ours must be lifted up by the Spirit of God. Jesus said, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." — *Luke 22:32.*

NEWS NOTES

Reasons For Indiana Withdrawals

Because of inaccuracies in a recently printed story, Rev. Burley Oren, Moderator of the Mid-West Congregational Christian Fellowship, has issued a statement stating that thirty-six churches have withdrawn from the Eastern Indiana Association (not thirty-one as reported from the State Conference office), and that the purpose of the withdrawal was to protect themselves from the proposed merger. "Our churches have *not* withdrawn from the denomination," says Mr. Oren. ". . . We will continue to operate and remain as Congregational Christian churches." The statement by Mr. Oren also calls attention to other inaccuracies in the published reports of the matter.

Illinois Fellowship

Tentative plans for the state annual meeting of the recently formed Fellowship of the Continuing Congregational Christian Churches of Illinois were made on July 26, at a meeting of the Executive Committee and other leaders. The meeting was held at the home of Theodore A. Duffield at Princeton. A mid-November date was tentatively selected, the meeting probably to be in the Chicago suburban area.

Among program topics suggested were: an address by an officer of the National Association; counselling churches on "What not to do about sending money" to the General Council; and reports on how churches that have obtained new votes on the merger have proceeded.

The Metlakatla Christian Mission

Dr. Howell D. Davies, Chicago, Illinois

Metlakatla is a village of about 1,000 Tsimshean Indians on Annette Island, some 12 miles south of Ketchikan in the panhandle of Alaska. The writer of this article was there on May 18, 1958, to preach the Centennial sermon as chairman of the board of three co-trustees responsible for administration of this historic mission. The others are Mr. H. Conwell Snoke, treasurer of the Methodist Board of Home Missions, and Mr. Lawrence E. Lindley, the executive head of the Indians Rights Association, and editor of *Indian Truth*. Editor Harold E. Fey of the *Christian Century* had preached the dedication sermon in the new building in March 1957. This Mission is undenominational, but for fellowship purposes has Methodist affiliation. The present pastor, Rev. Fred C. Schmidt, a Congregationalist, is retiring in September 1958, after serving two periods, 1937-1949 and 1956-1958.

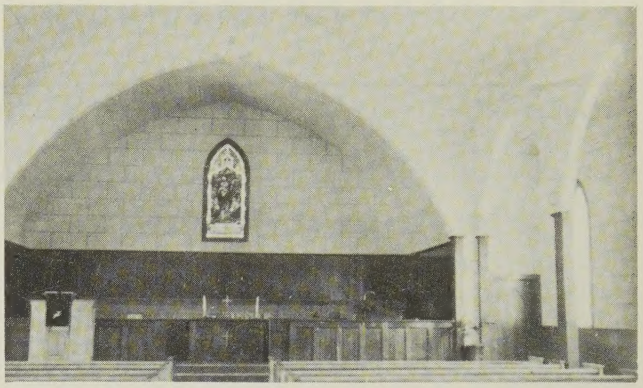
Praiseworthy Work by the Indians

The present edifice is the largest Protestant church building in Alaska, and has 50% more floor space than the old one which burned in December 1949. All the work on this splendid new building was done by the Indians themselves, and is a credit to them in every way. It is quality construction with modern equipment and furnishings. It has spacious lounges for men and women, with fireplaces, also a chapel, church school department rooms, an elegant choir robing and library room, and a spacious dining room with well equipped stage at one end. The kitchen is the last word in facilities. But all these are externals. More remarkable is the vital Christian faith of the people, and their devotion to the church and the memory of its founder, William Duncan. Their whole spirit is inspiring and their church services are of high order. The robed Junior choir of some forty-five sang "The Heavens are Telling" at the morning service, and the Adult choir of some forty-two sang selections by Schubert, Gounod, Bach, Haydn, Sullivan and Mallotte in the evening, this with finish, under the able leadership of Ray Haldane. (Mr. Duncan gave his converts English and Scotch names!)

The Metlakatla Story

The story of Metlakatla is one of the most thrilling in Missionary history. William Duncan, of Beverley, England, a prosperous young business man, was moved by an appeal of a Church of England Missionary Society speaker and was accepted for service in British Columbia in 1857, going on a battleship around Cape Horn to Victoria, where the governor tried his best to dissuade him from risking his life at the fort at Port Simpson, in the midst of warlike Indians. He spent a year learning the language before preaching the Gospel. Converts resulted, and they followed Mr. Duncan to what became Old Metlakatla, near Prince Rupert, B.C. The Christian colony grew and prospered, for Mr. Duncan taught them lucrative crafts and trades in addition to fishing. An elegant church was built.

Trouble arose when church authorities in England decided to take over and insist on a ritual difficult for the Indians to understand and follow. Moreover, the Hudson's Bay Company, feeling Mr. Duncan's competition, tried to undercut him. So Mr. Duncan, encouraged by Phillips Brooks and Henry Ward Beecher, appealed to President Cleveland and was offered an island of his choice under the American flag, for a new home for his people. Annette Island was selected and in 1887 some 800 Christian Indians moved to the present Metlakatla and carved a new home for themselves out of the wilderness. An orderly village was laid out, with a hydro-electric plant, with free electricity and running water in every home. Mr. Duncan insisted on high standards of conduct, and developed a fine educational program. No liquor was allowed on this reserve (not reservation). E. Stanley Jones visited Metlakatla and said, "This is the brightest spot in Alaska."



Interior of Metlakatla Church

Needs of Today

Mr. Duncan's frugality enabled him to leave a substantial fund to Metlakatla. The income from this goes toward the missionary's salary. But the Indians care for all operating expenses. Friends of the Mission have contributed to various projects from time to time, such as parsonage, Sunday School equipment, etc., and there is now need for extra help to meet rising costs.

The writer first visited Metlakatla in 1948, then in 1953. It was thrilling to be at the Centennial in May 1958, and to note evidences of the leadership being assumed by young married couples' groups and others of the new generation there. Any reader of this page would have been cheered had he heard these younger leaders speak out at the late "coffee" in the crowded dining room Sunday evening. It is indeed a privilege to cooperate and help support a going Christian concern like this. The town swarms with children, and with continued Christian leadership they will carry on for those who have passed on.

News Notes

New Member Church

At a regularly called meeting of the congregation on August 10, 1958, the First Congregational Church of Tarentum, Pennsylvania (Rev. Arthur W. Tiffen, Pastor) by unanimous vote affiliated with the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches for fellowship on the national level.

Service of Gathering at Anaheim

On June 29, 1958, a Service of Gathering was held at the new Anaheim Community Congregational Church, Anaheim, California, Rev. Walter J. Vernon, Pastor. The sermon was preached by Rev. Raymond A. Waser of Pomona.

Rededication at Calais

The First Congregational Church of Calais, Maine, easternmost National Association member church, rededicated its house of worship on Sunday, July 13, with sermon by Dr. Frederick M. Meek of the Old South Church in Boston. Rev. Clayton E. Richard is pastor at Calais.

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"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galatians 5:1

The Annual Meeting

The First Congregational Church, Detroit, Michigan, (see cover picture) will be host to the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, October 21-23, 1958. Professor George V. Bohman of Royal Oak, Michigan, Moderator, will preside.

Announcements containing the program for the meeting will be mailed to all member churches in the near future, from the central Executive Office in Milwaukee. This will include information regarding delegates, entertainment, travel expense pool, and other matters of interest and concern to our churches.

Important Business

Among important items of business will be certain proposed amendments to the Articles of Association and the By-Laws. It is proposed to amend Article IV, Section 3 of the Articles of Association so as to provide that while the Executive Committee shall be composed only of members of member churches of the Association, members of other committees and commissions, and other officers and employees shall be those chosen and approved by the Association in formal meeting or by the Executive Committee acting *ad interim*, or in the selection of its own sub-committees.

It is also proposed to amend Article II, Sections 2 and 3, of the By-Laws to read as follows:

"SECTION 2: Any church may designate one or more alternate delegates, in addition to the official delegate, who shall be certified in the same manner. Such alternate delegates may attend all meetings and take part in any business, but shall not be permitted to vote, except that one alternate delegate may vote for the church in the absence of the official delegate."

"SECTION 3. Any person interested and in sympathy with the Association may attend any meeting on his own initiative, or by designation of his church, as an Associate delegate with the privilege of the floor but without vote."

It will, of course, be possible for amendments or substitutions for these proposed changes to be moved from the floor. Their purpose is to clear up any possible misunderstandings as to the status of interested persons not belonging to member-churches and their right to serve on committees and commissions of the Association; and as to the status of non-delegates at the Association meetings.

The report of the Nominating Committee will be given by Rev. F. Willard Kime of Eaton Rapids, Michigan. Important business will be acted upon during the sessions. As at the Hartford meeting last fall, a very important feature of the program will be the inspirational addresses and services of worship.

One Church, One Vote

One of the distinctive facts about the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, as contrasted with the General Council, is that its membership consists of churches, not individuals. Every church is entitled to a voting delegate, whether from its own membership or by a proxy elected by it, provided only that no individual shall represent more than ten churches. The Association proclaims its responsibility to its member-churches. It therefore carries out on the national level the true Congregational principle of the sovereignty of the local church. In keeping with this, it is important that every member-church shall send a representative.

Any interested person who wishes further information about the meeting is invited to write the Executive Secretary, Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin, or the Eastern Field Representative, Rev. Joseph J. Russell, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts.

From the Letter Box

What a prize our cause drew in using the title "The Congregationalist," particularly in comparison with "The United Church Herald." It is just one more proof of *our* wanting to *continue* the Congregational Way of Life. — MRS. WALTER D. DUNHAM, Los Angeles

So many times the E & R's and the mergerites have published that "the E & R and CC Churches have united and become the United Church of Christ," and people believe it. Their propaganda saying that the United Church is a "great and growing concern" and other articles give the impression that the Congregational denomination is small and unimportant. Isn't it about time that we tell the world that Congregationalism is not dead? I wish someone would write a stirring article on "Congregationalism Is Alive," as fine, necessary, and important as ever, telling the reasons why this is so. — MRS. A. M. REED, Oak Park, Illinois

English Congregationalism is becoming less and less Independent, less and less Separatist . . . Arguments are very subtle. It is claimed that the guidance of the Divine Spirit is as real in National Assembly as in Church Meeting. With an argument of this kind we can become anything — Church of England, Methodist, Presbyterian, and even Roman Catholic.

— REV. WALTER H. DENBOW,
Exmouth, Devon, England

Published and circulated by the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches of the United States. Moderator, Professor George V. Bohman, 1014 Edgewood, Royal Oak, Michigan; Associate Moderator, Dr. Henry David Gray, South Congregational Church, Main and Buckingham Streets, Hartford 3, Connecticut; Scribe, Rev. Ward K. Klopp, Merrill, Michigan; Treasurer, Paul R. Biggs, Esq., Barclay Building, Oregon City, Oregon; Executive Secretary, Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin; Eastern Field Representative and Editor of THE CONGREGATIONALIST, Rev. Joseph J. Russell, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts.

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